



London Borough  
of Hounslow

# Hounslow Adult Social Care

Annual Report -  
Representations and Complaints

1 April 2009 to 31 March 2010

## INDEX

Item		Page No.
1.	Introduction	3
2.	Listening to Customers	3
3.	Members and MP Enquiries	5
4.	Access to Complaint Procedure	5
5.	Letting People Know How to Complain	8
6.	Listening To You	8
7.	How Complaints Were Made	9
8.	Making the Complaint and Feedback Procedures available to everyone	10
9.	Information Management Changes	12
10.	Changes to the Adult Social Care Complaint Procedure	12
11.	Complaint Management Overview	13
12.	Complaint Resolution	15
13.	Performance	16
14.	Complaint Outcomes	17
15.	Adjudication	20
16.	Objectives set for 2010 - 2011	21
17.	Conclusions	22

# Adult Social Care

## Representations and Complaints - Annual Report 2009-2010

### *Complaint(s)*

***“Learning from people’s experience of Adult Social Care services, to put right what may have gone wrong, or to assist them to tell us about the service choices they want us to help them achieve”***

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

This annual report is produced to comply with the Adult Social Care Service’s statutory duty to report on the representations and complaints it receives each year. This report covers the period between 1st April 2009 and 31st March 2010.

Each year the report is submitted to the Council’s Scrutiny Panel, and is then made available to residents of Hounslow as a public document

Adult Social Care Services, in partnership with other Council Departments, Health Services and Voluntary Groups help people aged 18+, who have one or more of the following needs, to live as safely and as independently as possible in Hounslow.

- be physically frail;
- have physical disabilities;
- have a sensory impairment;
- have a learning disability;
- have mental health needs;
- have long term medical conditions;
- misuse substances;

The help and support they receive is provided by the following:-

- Older People’s Services.
- Mental Health Services.
- Resources (directly provided and Independent and Voluntary Sector Residential, Day Support and Home Care Services).
- Independent Living Service.
- Learning Disability Service.
- Services for carers.

## **2. LISTENING TO CUSTOMERS**

### **2.1 Listening to the people who use Hounslow’s Services**

In the period covered by this report Hounslow Adult Social Care Services helped over four thousand residents and 3% of these customers provided feedback on the service they had received by making a representation or complaint.

## Customer Feedback (Representations)

Between 1st April 2009 and 31st March 2010 - 72 compliments were recorded and reported on each quarter to the Community Services Senior Management Team.

In this reporting period 14% more compliments were received than in 2008/2009.

### 2.3 Services who received compliments

Team(s) receiving compliment	Compliments received Q1	Compliments received Q2	Compliments received Q3	Compliments received Q4	TOTAL
Resource Teams	3	10	6	6	25
Older People's Teams	7	4	3	5	19
Access & Assessment Teams	4	1	3	-	8
Other Teams	9	4	4	3	20
<b>Total number compliments</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>72</b>

People often take the time to tell staff about their positive experiences of our services at a time of family sadness, or after a stressful event. They often express their gratitude for the care their relative has received or for the fact they had been looked after and comfortable in a residential placement. Other compliments are received following a team being able to help resolve a problem or provide information or a piece of equipment.

The following are two examples of people thanking staff for caring for their relatives:-

***"I would like to praise the team of carers who looked after my mother during the last week of her life. The respect and attention to her comfort was outstanding"***

***A son expressed his gratitude and thanks to staff for "the great improvement in his mother's wellbeing that enabled her to return home."***

### 2.4 Support for people who want help to make a complaint

Customers who want help and support to make a complaint can invite a friend to help them, or give their consent for a friend or relative to make the complaint on their behalf.

If they do not feel confident enough to speak about their complaint themselves, there are several local and national voluntary groups who can provide advocacy support in Hounslow e.g. Refugees in Effective and Active Partnership (REAP), Disability Network Hounslow, SANE line, Speak Out etc.

The Council's Adult Access Team provides advice and information to residents about a wide range of services and support organisations in Hounslow which can help them, this includes access to information or help to find advocacy support.

More recently, the Council has commissioned an advice and information service in the Voluntary Sector which can support people with advice, information and advocacy. This service works closely with the Adult Access Team and targets its services to those with low to moderate needs (i.e. who do not meet ASC criteria) and to self-funders. This information service is part of the Department's ongoing agenda to transform service provision and deliver personalised care.

An advocacy leaflet is also available with the contact numbers for the various groups who can provide advocacy support in Hounslow.

The Customer Relations Team does assist complainants with special or specific needs in finding an appropriate advocate to support them when required.

Customers receiving National Health Services as well as Adult Social Care can request the support of ICAS (Independent Complaints Advocate Service) to help with health care complaints.

The Hounslow LINK (Local Involvement Network) can support people to make a complaint about any aspect of health and social care services.

### 3. MEMBER AND MP ENQUIRIES

Hounslow residents can also raise their concerns or queries through their local Councillor or their Member of Parliament.

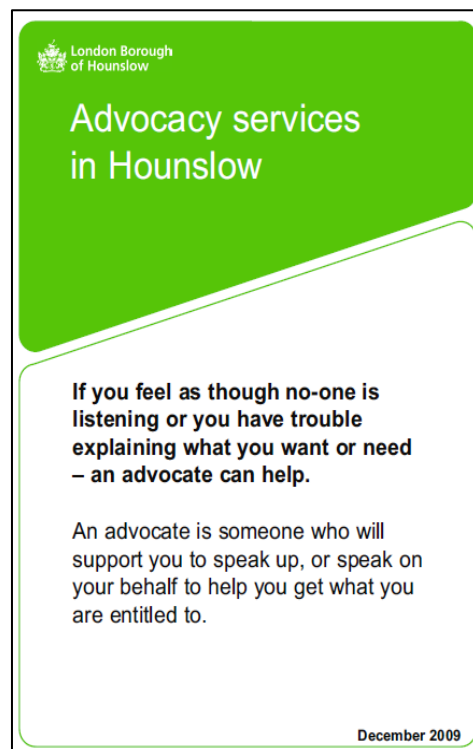
In this reporting period the Adult Social Care Service received 18 MP enquiries and 8 Member Enquiries.

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
MP Enquiries	4	1	1	0
Member Enquiries	6	4	7	1

### 4. ACCESS TO THE COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

The Adult Social Care Service very much wants to hear from people who have a problem with the service they are receiving in order to try and put things right as soon as possible, or explain why this is not possible.

We ensure that lessons learned from complaints and suggestions are shared across the organisation.



## 4.1 Lessons Learned

Team/Service	Issue	Changes made as a result
Financial Assessment Team	Complaint received from client's son who said he had not been told his father would have to pay for placement whilst in hospital	Paragraph added to standard finance letter explaining this in a clear and simple way.
ILT	ILT had a large number of complaints about reduction in care support following the review of cases where historically care support packages had been greater than current practice	Established practice to automatically review all assessments where the client is challenging the outcome
Resources	Client sustained head injury at Sandbanks whilst disorientated. Sensor mat not in place	There are now sensor mats by all beds
Respite	Under existing arrangements, clients with dementia were not always given the opportunity to familiarise themselves with their environment for short term respite	Following complaint we have issued guidance to staff to arrange familiarisation visits for people with dementia and their families where respite is planned.
CTPLD	Complaints about Direct Payments (DP) being refused whilst overseas.	When people have DP's the Care Manager explains that if they wish to travel overseas then DP's can be authorised to cover the same support needs as supplied in the UK.
CTPLD	Carer did not receive feedback from Care Manager following submission of Resident Led Assessment (RLA).	Care Managers now advise carers of the full process and likely timescales following assessment.
Older People's Team	Poor discharge arrangements, slow transfer of client information from Hospital to Community resulting in unsatisfactory care following discharge.	Joint working protocol agreed and put in place between OP Services and the Community Services of the Mental health Trust.
CTPLD	Complaint from resident that calls not returned.	Analysis showed that some carers/residents call disproportionately on a daily basis with no serious concerns. In supervision such carers/residents are identified and Care Manager agrees with resident/carers a certain day/time each week when they will call to go through any concerns. This is confirmed in writing, with clear arrangements in place for urgent or immediate safety concerns.

## 4.2 Action taken to improve complaints handling

- We resolve complaints quicker as we contact the complainant as early as possible and work with them once we know the outcome they want to achieve.
- We discuss at Team meetings and should a Social Worker feel a complaint may be forthcoming before it materialises, the Team Manager contacts the person concerned to try and resolve the complaint.
- Every information pack in the Putting People First bag and Carers pack has the new Policy included. This gives residents/informal carers up to date information on the latest policy.

Adult Social Care has a statutory duty to provide people using or wanting to use Adult Social Care Services with a simple complaints procedure that is both easy to access and to use.

In order to meet both of these aims (since 2005) Adult Social Care Services in Hounslow has developed a complaint management processes that focus on effective, prompt, customer centred resolution of complaints.

In 2009 the Department of Health issued new complaint guidance called 'Making Experiences Count'. This new complaint procedure has much in common with Hounslow's approach to complaint management, as its key aims are to resolve complaints quickly and to encourage people to comment on the services they receive. As its title suggests this new guidance aims to ensure Adult Social Care Services learn from people's service experiences in order to continually improve service delivery.

The Making Experiences Count (statutory) complaint procedure is also a key part of the National Social Care Transformation Programme to provide individual, person-centred Social Care Services. Each person making a complaint can now agree a complaint resolution plan, aimed at resolving their complaint as quickly as possible and, if at all feasible, achieve their desired outcome.

A leaflet is available in all service areas explaining this complaint procedure called 'Making Your Experience Count'.

To ensure the effective management of all complaints, they are tracked from receipt to closure. In this reporting period nearly 90% of the complaints Adult Social Care Services were resolved.

The complaint procedure is continuously monitored to see if it can be made more effective. Earlier this year it became clear that it was taking longer than before to resolve some complaints. As a result, work is in progress to revise the procedure in order to shorten the time taken to complete individual complaint resolution plans. However, it is accepted that some complaints are more complex and will take longer to resolve

The revised procedure should be operational in September of this year.



## 5. LETTING PEOPLE KNOW HOW TO COMPLAIN

In the past year, in order to let residents know of both their right to complain, and how to make a complaint, the Customer Relations Team has:-

- Enclosed complaint leaflets with all letters acknowledging receipt of a complaint.
- Sent out complaint leaflets on request.
- Ensured local offices have supplies of up to date complaint leaflets.
- Held complaint management briefing sessions for Adult Social Care managers and staff to enable them to manage complaints effectively and answer complainant's questions.
- Ensured that all residents receiving services know of their right to complain and how to make a complaint (via Care Management Teams).
- Distributed information sheets at service user and carer forum(s), about 'Making Your Experience Count'
- Attended Partnership Boards and local user forums.

## 6. LISTENING TO YOU

Information posters and display units are available at Locality Offices, displaying Customer Comment Card asking people to help, by telling the department about the service they have received or would like to receive.

The display units also contain information leaflets explaining how customers can make a complaint, as well as easy to read complaints information fact sheets and complaints forms for people with communication needs or learning disabilities.

London Borough of Hounslow  
Adult Social Care Services  
**Comment Card**  
Listening to You - tell us what you like, what you do not like and what we can do better.

My comment:

My details (optional):  
Name:  
Contact details:

If you are happy for us to contact you about your comment please enter your preferred contact details (e.g. telephone number, email address) in the box above. January 2008

Return this card by post, no stamp required, or contact the Customer Relations Team:  
Telephone 020 8583 3333 Fax 020 8583 3071  
Email: [complaints.crt@hounslow.gov.uk](mailto:complaints.crt@hounslow.gov.uk) Web: [www.hounslow.gov.uk](http://www.hounslow.gov.uk) **Listening to You.**

This summer the Customer Relations Team will start a regular programme of contacting people who have complained in the previous quarter to ask for their views on the complaint procedure. This programme will use a telephone structured questionnaire, focused on whether the people found the procedure to be user friendly and effective, rather than revisiting the outcome of individual complaints. A similar questionnaire will be used to ask managers and staff about their views of the same person's complaint.

### 6.1 Customers can make a complaint – in a number of ways, such as:-

- Talk to their Social Worker.
- Talk to the Customer Relations Team by phone or face to face.
- Leave a complaint message on the answer phone outside office hours and their calls are returned as soon as is possible.
- Complete a complaint form on the Council's website.
- Complete a complaint form at the back of the complaint leaflet.
- Phone the contact numbers on complaint posters.
- Via e-mail to the Customer Relations Team e-mail address.

## 7. HOW COMPLAINTS WERE MADE

In 2009/10 70% of the complaints received were made by relatives, friends or advocates on behalf of customers. 30% of complaints were made by customers themselves.

Operational staff and the Customer Relations Team always request the customer's consent before a complaint can be progressed on their behalf. This is to comply with the Data Protection Act, assure confidentiality of customers' information and to be certain that the customer wants the outcome being sought on their behalf.

Services are provided directly by the Adult Social Care Teams and by external (contracted) providers on behalf of social care services. Table 1 below shows a year on year comparison of who made the complaints across both services.

### 7.1 Table 1 – who made the complaints in 2009/10 compared to 2008/09

Who Made Complaint – Comparison		
	2009/10	2008/09
Customer – Direct services	17	30
Relative/Other – Direct services	52	30
Customers - Home care agency	8	40
Relatives/other – Home care agency	8	60

79% of complaints received 2009/2010 were about Adult Social Care (direct) services.

- 25% of these complaints were made by customers themselves.
- 75% of these complaints were made on behalf of customers.

18% of complaints received 2009/2010 were about External Homecare services.

- 50% of these complaints were made by customers themselves.
- 50% of these complaints were made on behalf of customers.

Table 2 shows who complainants chose to make their complaint to. A number of Hounslow residents wrote personally to the Director of Community Services about their concerns.

## 7.2 Table 2 – who complainants made their complaint to 2009/10, compared to 2008/09

Who Customers Contacted to Make Their Complaint		
Received by:	2009/10	2008/09
Customer Relations Team / Director	40	42
Service Team/External Home Care	127	45

- 36% of complaints made directly to service teams about external home care services.
- 60% of complaints about directly provided services were made to Customer Relations and the Director.
- 40% of complaints about directly provided services are received by Service Teams.

Most people want an answer to their complaint as soon as possible and in this reporting period nearly 50% of complainants chose to make their complaints by e-mail or by telephone. The overnight voicemail is also used by people contacting the Customer Relations Team to complain and request that their messages are answered as soon as possible. All voicemail messages are answered the following day.

## 7.3 Table 3 - method used to make complaints in 2009/10 compared to 2008/09

Method of Contact - Overview		
Method used:	2009/10	2008/09
Writing (e-mail, fax, complaint form, letter)	37	60
Telephone	41	90
In Person	9	17

- 47% of complaints were made by telephone in 2009/10

## 8. MAKING THE COMPLAINT AND FEEDBACK PROCEDURES AVAILABLE TO EVERYONE

Hounslow Council both wants and is required to ensure these procedures are easily available to all Hounslow residents. As a result complaints received by Adult Social Care Services are monitored to ensure they reflect the various communities living in the Borough of Hounslow. This enables the Customer Relations Team to identify where additional awareness-raising about making a complaint may be necessary.

**8.1 Table 4 – shows complaints made by communities and services they complained about in 2009 /2010**

<b>2009/2010 Ethnicity</b>	<b>Learning Disability</b>	<b>Mental Health</b>	<b>Older People</b>	<b>Resource Services</b>	<b>Physical Disability</b>	<b>Customer Finance</b>	<b>Total</b>
White British	9	2	32	7	7	1	<b>58</b>
White European	3	-	1	-	-	-	<b>4</b>
White Irish			1	1			<b>2</b>
Other Asian	4		6		2	1	<b>13</b>
Black Caribbean			1				<b>1</b>
Black African			1				<b>1</b>
White other		1	1		1		<b>3</b>
Not Known / Not Disclosed			2	2	1		<b>5</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>87</b>

Nearly 30% of complaints received in 2009/10 were made by ethnic minority customers compared to 34% in 2008/09. However, at least 30% of the external home care provider complaints reported to contract monitoring were made by ethnic minority customers.

**2009/10**

- 71% of complaints were made by non-ethnic minority customers.
- 29% of complaints were made by ethnic minority customers.

**2008/09**

- 66% of complaints were made by non-ethnic minority customers.
- 34% of complaints were made by ethnic minority customers.

**8.2 Table 5 - shows the number of complaints made by customers using External Home Care and Adult Social Care services by age and gender in 2008 – 2009**

<b>Gender</b>		
Adult male clients	34	39%
Adult female clients	53	61%
Clients Adult	30	34%
Clients 70+	57	66%

Of the 87 complaints received from Adult Social Care and External Home Care services, 61% were made by women and 39% were made by men.

## **9. INFORMATION MANAGEMENT CHANGES**

Changes to categorisation mentioned in last year's report were dependent on the planned update of the Respond database which, for technical reasons, has been delayed and will not be on site and functioning until late 2010. It will however be organised into categories which reflect changes to the departmental structure and to meet reporting requirements for compliance with the 'Making Experiences Count' guidance issued by the Department of Health.

## **10. CHANGES TO THE ADULT SOCIAL CARE COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

This is the first Annual Complaint Report since the introduction on 1st April 2009 of 'Making Experiences Count' and the statutory regulations for the guidance is the **Local Authority and National Health Service Complaints (England) Regulations 2009**.

This guidance re-focuses complaint management on:-

- Customer led, early complaint resolution, rather than on the complaint procedure itself.
- Providing a common complaint procedure for Adult Social Care Services and all National Health Services to help deal with the joint complaints.

As previously stated, this guidance has much in common with both the current Hounslow Adult Social Care complaint procedure and with the revised procedure to be introduced in Autumn 2010 following local consultation.

In addition from October 2010 Adult Social Care Services nationally are required to be registered with the Care Quality Commission and must comply with Regulation 19 which states:-

*(1) For the purposes of assessing and preventing or reducing the impact of unsafe or inappropriate care or treatment, the registered person must have an effective system in place (referred to in this regulation as “the complaint system”) for identifying, receiving, handling and responding appropriately to complaints and comments made by service users, or persons acting on their behalf, in relation to carrying on of the regulated activity. The new complaint procedure itself is quite different. It is now a two stage procedure.*

*(2) In particular the registered person must-*

*(a) Bring the complaint system to the attention of service users, and persons acting on their behalf in a suitable manner and format*

*(b) Provide service users and those acting on their behalf with support to bring a complaint or make a comment, where such assistance is necessary*

*(c) Ensure that any complaint is fully investigated and, so far as reasonably practicable, resolved to the satisfaction of the service user, or the person acting on the service user’s behalf; and*

*(d) take appropriate steps to co-ordinate a response to a complaint where that complaint relates to care or treatment provided to a service user in circumstances where provision of such care or treatment has been shared with, or transferred to, others*

*(3) The registered person must send to the Commission, when requested to do so a summary of the –*

*(a) Complaints made pursuant to paragraph (1) and*

*(b) Responses made by registered person to such complaints.*

***(From Regulation 19 of the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2010)***

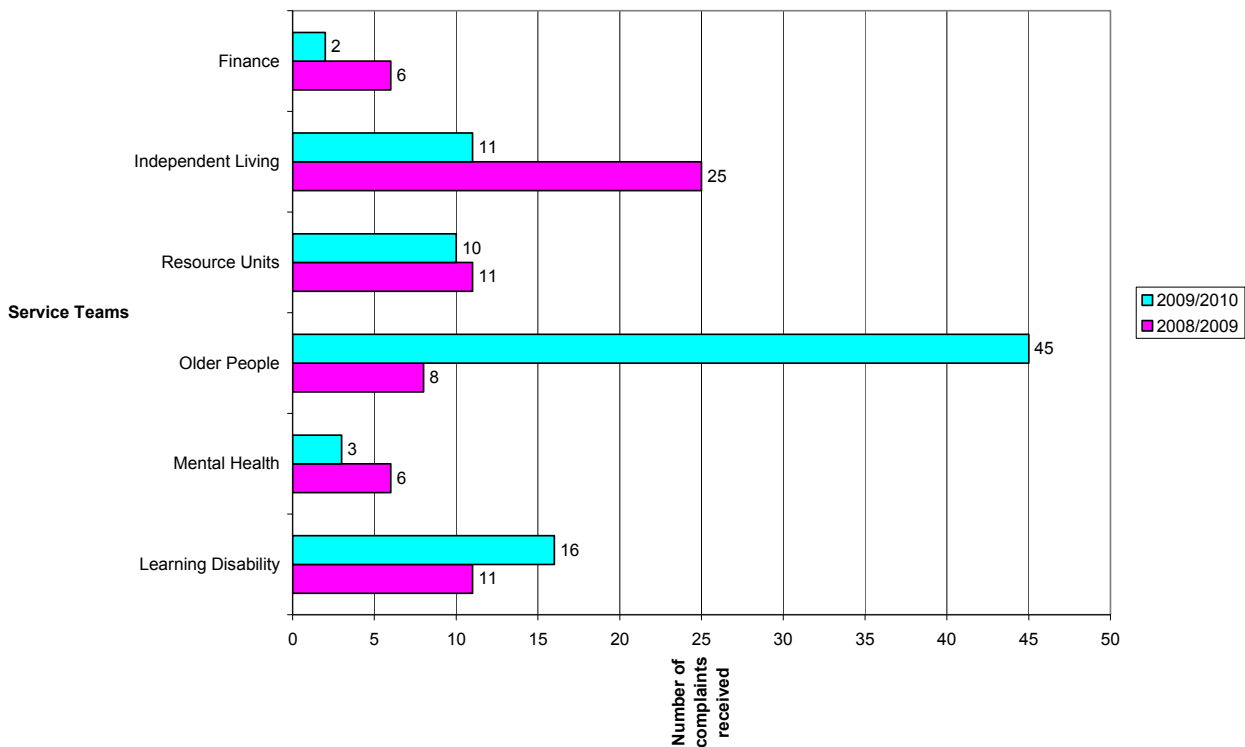
## **11. COMPLAINTS - MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW 2009/10**

### **11.1 Complaint Activity**

Adult Social Care services received 87 complaints between 1/4/09 and 31/3/10.

- 69 from customers receiving directly provided Adult Social Care services.
- 18 from customers made to Customer Relations Team who received External Homecare Services.
- 92 complaints about external home care services identified as part of the contract monitoring process (not included the chart below)

**11.2 Table 6 shows the number of complaints received by each service in 2009/10 compared to 2008/2009**



- Most services received fewer complaints in this reporting period, with the largest reduction being the Independent Living Team who received nearly 50% less. This was achieved by introducing practice to automatically review all assessments where the outcome was being questioned.
- There has been an increase in the number of complaints received by the Older People’s Teams in this reporting period, although 18 of the complaints in the above chart were about external home care. Learning Disability Services also received more complaints in this reporting period than in the previous year.
- The Customer Finance Team reduced the number of complaints they receive by introducing new systems and processes.

The above complaints were managed by external provider agencies (contract) in compliance with Care Quality Commission regulations and were reported to Customer Relations by the Contract Monitoring Team.

In the period covered by this report the Contract Monitoring Team has worked with home care providers to resolve complaints. On some occasions they have suspended using an agency until their performance has improved.

These services were provided on behalf of the following services:-

- Older People’s
- Mental Health
- Learning Disability
- Independent Living

**11.3 Table 7 – shows number of complaints received by external home care providers**

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Mears</b>	<b>Seva care</b>	<b>QCL</b>	<b>Enara</b>	<b>Supreme</b>	<b>Homeaid</b>
Number complaints received	<b>19</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
Number of hours provided	59,000	65,000	55,000	11,000	5,000	9,000
Complaints per 10,000 hours	3.2	1.1	1.8	12	12	7.7
<b>Agency</b>	<b>Brook Street</b>	<b>Medico</b>	<b>London Care</b>	<b>Care UK</b>	<b>A Care</b>	<b>SJS</b>
Number complaints received	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1</b>
Number of hours provided	7,000	65,000	2,000	26,000	2,000	14,000
Complaints per 10,000 hours	0.7	1.7	15	2.3	40	0.7

Note : The figures contained in this table were provided by the external home care providers through submission of monthly returns to the Borough's Contracts Team.

## **12. COMPLAINT RESOLUTION**

In Hounslow resolution of customer complaints is achieved by:

- Actively listening to residents concerns.
- Clarifying what they want to achieve.
- Answering any questions in a way that can be easily understood
- Keeping residents updated.
- Sending plain language written responses which answer their concerns.

87% of the complaints received between 1st April 2009 to 31st March 2010, where the outcome of the complaint was known at the time of this report, were resolved. Of those where the outcome was not known at the time of report there are a small number we are unlikely to be able to resolve, as they are currently progressing their concerns via a legal route.

**12.1 Table 8 shows the number of complaints resolved by service and those progressed with the Local Government Ombudsman**

Service	Learning Disability	Mental Health	Older People	Resources	Independent Living	Customer Finance
Resolved	13	2	40	9	10	2
Not resolved	1	1	2	0	1	0
LGO Stage 2 (new procedure)	1	0	0	0	2	0
LGO Stage 3 (old procedure)	1	0	0	0	1	0

Between 1st April 2009 and 31st March 2010 there was a short period when complaints made under the old procedure were being completed and complaints made under the new procedure were being progressed with the Ombudsman. Table 8 shows the number with the Ombudsman under the old procedure and the number that were progressed under the new procedure to the Ombudsman for Independent Review at Stage 2.

The outcome of the two Stage 3 (old procedure) Ombudsman complaints was that they were not upheld.

Two of the outcomes of the Stage 2 (new procedure) were resolved by agreeing local settlements based on the Local Government Ombudsman's recommendations and resulted in compensation payments for time, trouble and delay of £50 and £250.

The Ombudsman investigates complaints made about the Council and on occasion issues a Formal Report where he considers the maladministration to be of a serious enough nature to warrant this action. Under Section 30 of the Local Government Act 1974 the LGO has powers to produce a Report following an investigation into a matter; this Report can include recommendations. The Council is required to make a press announcement in more than one paper within two weeks of receiving the Report and make it available at one or more Council offices for a period of three weeks. Section 31 of the Local Government Act 1974 requires the Council to consider the Report (i.e. at Borough Council) and within three months of receiving the Report notify the LGO of the actions the Council has taken or proposes to take. This Section of the Act also provides that if the LGO is not satisfied with the action the Council has taken in response to an adverse Report he shall make a Further Report which can include further recommendations. This Further Report must also be announced in the press, made available to the public and considered formally by the Council

Within LB Hounslow if the Ombudsman issues an adverse Report **it is the relevant Department's responsibility** to prepare a report for Borough Council, arrange the press notice, make the Report available to the public, and satisfy the LGO that it has implemented the recommendations and these actions need to be undertaken within the required timescales.

### 13. PERFORMANCE

In the past, complaints received about directly provided Adult Social Care Services were recorded as being standard or complex, with standard having a 10 working day response target and complex having a 20 working day response target.

However, the guidance issued in April 2009 for ‘Making Experiences Count’ does not include specific timescales. Instead it allows for complaints to be answered within a timescale agreed with the complainant, and that allows sufficient time for the complaint resolution plan to be implemented.

#### 13.1 Table 9 shows how long each service took to resolve the complaints they received

Service	Learning Disability	Mental Health	Older People	Resources	Independent Living	Finance	Total
Resolved within 10 working days	2	3	11	2	2	2	<b>22</b>
Resolved within 20 working days	4	0	19	2	2	0	<b>27</b>
Resolved within 30 working days	4	0	3	1	1	0	<b>9</b>
Resolved in over 30 working days	6	0	12	5	5	0	<b>28</b>

- Older People’s services resolved nearly 70% of their complaints within 20 working days even though they received the highest number of complaints and have the largest number of service users
- Resources and Independent Living resolved 80% of their complaints within 20 working days but both received considerably fewer complaints
- Mental Health and Customer Finance resolved 100% of their complaints within 10 working days but received a low number of complaints
- Overall, nearly 50% of complaints were resolved within 20 working days, but another third took longer than 30 working days. We aim to address this issue by revising the ‘Making Experiences Count’ complaint procedure in Autumn 2010.

### 14. COMPLAINT OUTCOMES – 2009/2010

The table below provides information about:

- Reasons given by customers for making their complaints.
- Action taken to resolve their complaint.
- Adjudication of their complaints.

### 14.1 Table 10 - Reason(s) given for making Adult Social Care Complaints

Service/ Reason for complaint	Learning Disability	Mental Health	Older People	Resources	Independent Living Team	Finance	Total
Disagreed with SSD decision	3	-	2	-	2	1	<b>8</b>
Failure to provide service	5	2	16	2	5	1	<b>31</b>
Low standard of care	2	1	14	4	2	-	<b>23</b>
Other	3		6	1	-	-	<b>10</b>
Assessment	-	-	1	-	-	-	<b>1</b>
Staff attitude	-	-	1	-	-	-	<b>1</b>
Service not available	1	-	2	-	-	-	<b>3</b>
Communication	1	-	3	-	1	-	<b>5</b>
Poor quality facilities	-	-	-	2	-	-	<b>2</b>
Low standard of social work	-	-	-	1	-	-	<b>1</b>
Timescale of service delivery	1	-	-	-	1		<b>2</b>
	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>87</b>

- 36% failure to provide a service as the reason for complaint
- 26% low standard of care as the reason for complaint
- 9% disagreed with social work decision as the reason for complaint
- 28% of the complaints about failure to provide a service and low standard of care were complaint(s) made about external home care services

When the new Respond database is in place Adult Social Care will update categories/complaint definitions to reflect each team's service standard. This will help to monitor standards of service delivery better.

#### 14.2 Table 11 – Outcomes and action taken to resolve Adult Social Care complaints

Service/ Outcome	Learning Disability	Mental Health	Older People	Resources	Independent Living	Finance	Total
Apology given	6	0	9	4	2	0	<b>21</b>
Explanation given	6	1	10	4	2	2	<b>25</b>
Re-assessment	0	1	0	0	1	0	<b>2</b>
Management action	0	0	15	1	0	0	<b>16</b>
Staff training	0	0	4	0	0	0	<b>4</b>
Safeguarding	0	0	1	0	0	0	<b>1</b>
LGO financial Remedy	0	0	0	0	2		<b>2</b>
Outcome sought by complainant achieved	4	1	6	1	4	0	<b>16</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>87</b>

- Nearly 50% of complaints were resolved by an apology being given or by receiving a clear explanation of a decision, or why an action had been taken, that had resulted in a complaint being made. Although poor communication is not often given as the reason for making a complaint, these outcomes seem to indicate that poor communication is the real cause of a large number of complaints.
- Services were able to resolve 18% of complaints by achieving the outcome wanted by the complainant and 18% more were resolved by managers taking "management action". Both of these outcomes required managers to be open / flexible in their approach to resolving complaints.

**14.3 Table(s) 12 – gives information about the reason given for external home care complaints and the actions taken to resolve them**

Agency	Mears	Sevacare	QCL	Enara	Homeaid	Care UK
<b>Reason for Complaint</b>	Quality. Communication. Failed visit. Missed visit	Late visit. Poor consistency. Non compliance. Safeguarding (2)	Late visit. Destruction of food. Manual handling	Missed visit. Late visit Poor quality	Privacy not respected. Poor quality. Carer attitude. Change from shopping not returned (forgot)	Late visit
<b>Action taken</b>	Issues followed up at supervision. Carer Training Spot check visits	Change of carers. Safeguarding strategy meeting	Carer replaced. Food replaced. Manual handling procedure explained	Carers disciplined Spot check visits. Carer training	Disciplinary. Introduced finance record sheet	Supervision of carer

Agency	Brook Street	Medico	Supreme	London Care	SJS	Allied Care
<b>Reason for complaint</b>	Poor practice	Missed visit. Late visit. Non compliance with care plan. Safeguarding	Late visit. Wrong medication. 2 carers coming at different times. Care plan not in home	Late visit	Late visits. Rough handling. 1 carer arrived instead of 2. Carer not following careplan	Missed visits. Poor quality of care. Three safeguarding cases
<b>Action taken</b>	Carer disciplined	Management action. Care plan failure dealt with in supervision. Safeguarding strategy meetings	Rearranged carer rota. Safeguarding strategy meeting. Apology. Care plan placed in home	Carer changed	Management action. Carer training. Monitoring visits	Carer removed from Hounslow contract Packages transferred to alternative providers

## 15. ADJUDICATION

Overall 68% of complaints received in this reporting period were upheld at least in part. As previously stated, this is the first annual report since the introduction of the 'Making Experiences Count' guidance and the introduction of individual complaint resolution plans.

Resolution plans are clearly focused on trying to meet an individual's choices as well as needs and therefore this method of adjudicating complaints is not always appropriate. If a provider is able to change the way their service is provided to deliver the complaint outcome sought by a customer, this is choice and not a service failure. It is hoped the Department of Health and Local Government Ombudsman will amend their reporting requirements in the near future to reflect this type of issue.

### 15.1 Table 13 – Adjudication outcome(s) of Adult Social Care complaints

Service	Learning Disability	Mental Health	Older People	Resources	Independent Living	Finance	Total
Upheld	50%	60%	56%	100%	55%	50%	60%
Not upheld	6%	30%	27%	0	18%	50%	18%

*Complaints upheld in part have been included with the complaints reported above as upheld.*

### 16. OBJECTIVES SET FOR 2010 – 2011

Objective:	Action:	Target:	Outcome:
<p>Ensure teams can answer the public's questions about feedback and complaint procedures.</p> <p>Complaints received are managed through to prompt effective resolution.</p>	<p>To simplify complaint procedure by Autumn 2010</p> <p>To set up a customer feedback/complaint management skills training course for Team Managers. This will include session from safeguarding</p>	<p>80% of complaints resolved through implementation of individual complaint resolution plans.</p>	<p>New procedure in place by end of October 2010.</p> <p>Evidence of increased number of complaints resolved through the complaint resolution process by April 2011.</p>
<p>To ensure the quality and effectiveness of external services meets</p> <p>(1) clients needs</p> <p>(2) provides safe/ appropriate service delivery</p>	<p>To work with external providers and ADSC contract monitoring team to achieve;</p> <p>(1) Effective and timely reporting of provider complaints.</p> <p>(2) To work with providers to resolve joint complaints</p>	<p>Up to date information received from providers</p> <p>Prompt notification of all complaints that involve client safety and wellbeing</p>	<p>Increased evidence of outcomes sought by complainants achieved in externally provided services.</p> <p>Timely reporting of incidents and safeguarding</p> <p>Evaluation meeting with providers in March / April 2011</p>

<b>Objective:</b>	<b>Action:</b>	<b>Target:</b>	<b>Outcome:</b>
Ongoing Implementation of 'Making Experiences Count' - single NHS and Adult Social Care procedure	Consult with public and staff on revised complaint procedure.  Commence customer and staff feedback monitoring of procedure in October 2010	To use feedback from both parties to inform:  (1) revised procedure (2) continuous improvement of procedure (3) achieve regulatory compliance	Evidence of improved customer satisfaction levels.
To set up a new (Respond) database to meet reporting needs (currently October 2010)	To guide the categorisation of new Respond database to  (1) maximise its ability to report effectively on ADSC mixed economy services and budgets (2) aid aggregation and analysis of cross directorate data for cross directorate reporting.	To work with Respond project lead to ensure  (1) meets most of Adult Social Care reporting needs (2) keeps SSD records confidential/ need to know (3) Some generic categorisation for cross ADSC reporting	New database in place reflecting categories appropriate to Adult Social Care.
Agree the future direction for customer relations management for the directorate	To plan future direction of Customer Relations and its statutory role – through service transformation and delivery of Department of Health agenda	Consideration through SMT	More streamlined Customer Relations Services resulting in more holistic responses to complaints and wider sharing of lessons learned.

## 17. CONCLUSIONS

In the past year the Customer Relations Service has continued to work with operational social care managers and staff to implement the complaint procedures in an impartial, open and customer focused way.

Although the new complaint guidance, 'Making Experiences Count', introduced last April had much in common with our previous approach to complaint management, on review it seems to have lengthened the time taken to resolve complaints through use of individual complaint resolution plans.

As explained earlier in this report, it is intended that the current procedure will be simplified to address this. The new procedure had to be implemented at very short notice so it was not possible to carry out a consultation exercise prior to it being introduced. However, consultation on the revised procedure will be carried out prior to implementing any changes.

In the past year Adult Social Care services have continued to resolve most of the complaints they receive. Only a small number of people have felt the need to progress their complaint with the Local Government Ombudsman for Independent Review at Stage 2 of the statutory complaint procedure.

In the coming year there will be further changes to complaint management when (in October 2010) people paying for their own services will have the right to progress their complaint with the Local Government Ombudsman if their private provider cannot resolve their complaint.

To continue to evolve a learning-focused complaint service it is important for all staff to understand their role in resolving complaints and to see them as a positive means of improving services. To help support this, briefing sessions and key skills training sessions for first line managers are being developed.

In 2010/2011, the Customer Relations Team will continue to work with operational staff to resolve customers' complaints promptly and effectively and collect data for performance management reporting and service development.